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OPEN TO ALL SUGGESTIONS, SAYS GOVT AMID OUTCRY OVER DRAFT IT RULES

Ministry of Electronics and IT (Meity) on Tuesday met intermediaries and civil society groups to hear their concerns over the proposed amendments

MAY EXTEND APRIL 14 DEADLINE FOR FEEDBACK

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, IT Secretary S Krishnan said that the ministry is very "open-minded" and will examine all suggestions. Krishnan also indicated that the government may extend the April 14 deadline for receiving feedback on the proposed IT rules amendments and will consider industry and stakeholder views before finalising any changes

CALL FOR WITHDRAWAL OF PROPOSAL

- Krishnan said the feedback received ranged from requests for more time to demands for outright withdrawal of the draft amendments
- The backlash comes in the wake of proposed amendments that significantly widen the ambit to include "news and current affairs content" posted by non-publisher users such as influencers | **P13**

MARCH 30

WHEN MEITY PROPOSED DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO THE 2021 IT RULES

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

Civilisational wipeout threat

Trump warns he will bomb Iran back to the Stone Age if it does not make a deal; Tehran defiant; Hormuz resolution in UNSC shot down

AGENCIES @ Washington/ Tehran

IN an unprecedented escalation of his war of words, US President Donald Trump on Tuesday warned Iran that a "whole civilisation will die tonight" if Tehran doesn't make a deal with the US by the latest deadline set by him – Tuesday 8 pm EDT (Wednesday 3.30 am Tehran time).

Iran rejected the threat, with President Masoud Pezeshkian saying millions of Iranians, including himself, are ready to sacrifice their lives in the war. The Islamic Republic urged young people to form human chains around power plants and other targets.

Trump's major demands are reopening the Strait of Hormuz and handing over the uranium stockpile.

"A whole civilization will die tonight, never to be brought back again. I don't want that to happen, but it probably will. However, now that we have Complete and Total Regime Change, where different, smarter, and less radicalized minds prevail, maybe something revolutionarily wonderful can happen... We will find out tonight!" Trump wrote on Truth Social.

A whole civilization will die tonight, never to be brought back again. I don't want that to happen, but it probably will
Donald Trump, US president

DAY 39 | WAR WATCH

In an equally threatening tone, US Vice President J D Vance said: "We've got tools in our toolkit that we so far haven't decided to use. The President of the United States can decide to use them, and he will decide to use them if the Iranians don't change their course of conduct."

Vance's comment, made during a press meet in Budapest, led to speculation about use of nuclear weapons. However, the White House later clarified that Vance did not mean a nuclear strike against Tehran.

The developments come on a day when a UN Security Council resolution aimed at reopening the Strait of Hormuz was shot down after Russia and China vetoed it.

Even before the deadline, US-Israel airstrikes hit two bridges and a train station, as well as the infrastructure on Kharg Island, a key hub for Iranian oil production.

On Monday, Trump had threatened to blow up "every bridge and power plant" in Iran, an action the UN considers a war crime. "Under international law, deliberately attacking civilians and civilian infrastructure is a war crime," UN high commissioner for human rights Volker Turk said.

Strong Indian advisory in Iran

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

THE Indian Embassy in Iran on Tuesday issued a safety advisory for its nationals, urging them to stay indoors and avoid military installations or upper floors of multi-storey buildings for the next 48 hours amid escalating US-Israel attacks.

"In continuation of previous advisories, Indian nationals who are still in Iran must stay where they are for the next 48 hours, avoiding all electric, military installations and upper floors of multi-storey buildings, remaining indoors, and coordinating any highway movement strictly with the Embassy," the advisory said. It also urged hotel residents to be contact with embassy teams.

"In view of the rapidly evolving situation in Iran, Indian nationals who are currently in Iran are advised to stay put where they are, shelter in place and avoid further movements," MEA said. Any movement toward border crossings must be coordinated with the embassy. Emergency helplines have been provided: +98 912 810 9115, +98 912 810 9102, +98 912 810 9109, +98 993 217 9359. P12

91L names out, TMC's minority base may take hit

SUBHENDU MAITI @ Kolkata

A whopping 91 lakh names have been deleted from the West Bengal electoral rolls following the special intensive revision, which could impact the minority vote base of the ruling Trinamool Congress in the state.

Late on Monday night, the Election Commission of India (ECI) released a list categorising eligible and ineligible voters from the 60.06 lakh electors previously marked 'under adjudication.'

Of this, 27,16,393 voters have been declared ineligible to vote in the upcoming Assembly polls, taking the total number of deletions to 91 lakh.

Over 32.68 lakh voters have been marked as eligible in the final rolls. With this, the number of valid voters stands at 6,77,20,728.

Earlier, on February 28, the ECI had published a list of 63.66 lakh deleted voters, including 58.25 lakh classified as absent, shifted, dead, or duplicate (ASDD).

Following the latest revision, the number of valid voters stands at 6,77,20,728, including the 32.68 lakh newly confirmed eligible voters.

West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee said her party will fight for the 27 lakh voters whose names have been deleted after adjudication.

She alleged that Muslims, Matuas, and Rajbongshis have been targeted for deletion.

On Monday, the Supreme Court had rejected the state's demand for interim relief for certain excluded voters, stating the matter should not be rushed.

68% cut in Murshidabad

Murshidabad, a district with over 70% Muslim population, is the worst hit. Out of 11,01,145 adjudicated voters, 4,55,137 are ineligible. In total, 7,48,959 names have been deleted from the district's rolls – 68% of the total

₹3,500cr rise in PRR Ph-1 cost; further increase likely

INDRA S @Bengaluru

THE Bengaluru Business Corridor's (BBC) 73-km long phase-1 already records a cost escalation of about Rs 3,500 crore, from Rs 6,800 to 7,000 crore in 2022–23 to around Rs 10,500 crore at present. The costs could escalate further as the project progresses across the full stretch.

LK Atheeq, Chairperson of BBC, previously known as the Peripheral Ring Road (PRR), said the revised estimate reflects updated designs and prevailing rates. According to him, the rise is due to annual revisions in the schedule of rates over the past three years, typically increasing by 8 to 10% each year, along with significant design changes. The proposed road width has been expanded from 50 metres to 65 metres, with service roads planned on both sides, he added.

"At least eight major interchanges have been planned now, compared to just three earlier, along with several flyovers, including a five-km elevated stretch in Package 1," Atheeq said. The addition of multiple cloverleaf interchanges at key junctions such as Doddaballapura Road, Hennur Road (near Byrathi), Whitefield and Sarjapur, along with increased elevated corridors, has also contributed to the higher cost. Phase-1 has been divided into three packages, with revised lengths of about 21 km, 20 km and 30 km.

However, the PRR Raitha Haagu Niveshanadarara Sangha (farmer groups and site owners) have raised concerns over what they describe as a steep rise in project costs. P2

As summer peaks, up to 7 tmcft may be lost from Karnataka dams, lakes

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

WITH scorching heat, Karnataka is expected to lose up to 7 tmcft of water from all the reservoirs, tanks, rivers and other surface water resources this summer, forcing farmers and others to depend on ground water for drinking and agricultural purposes.

Some districts, especially in North Karnataka, are experiencing temperatures of around 40 degrees Celsius, which will only go up in the coming days. GS Srinivas Reddy, former director, Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre (KSNDMC), said the evaporation is around 6 mm per day during April and May and it will go up to 150 mm. This roughly translates to 0.3 metre, or 1 foot, for two months. "Be it a tank, river or reservoir, water during summer gets evaporated by 1 foot," he said.

Reddy said that at many places, farmers use flood irrigation to water their crops, where evaporation is high. This causes more water loss, though awareness has been created on using sprinklers or drip-irrigation systems. "Water is also lost due to transpiration, where plants and vegetation let out more water and demand more frequent watering," he explained. Under such situations, it is common to depend on

groundwater, which dries up borewells. "When water from surface sources evaporates, people look for ground water which is a common source of water for drinking," he said. Last year, evaporation was slightly lesser at 6 mm per day. That was because of good pre-monsoon rain during April-end and May that had filled up dams and water bodies and turned soil moist, lessening evaporation.

A senior official from the Agriculture Department said farmers, especially from south-interior and northern parts of the state, look for summer crops. "If the crop is good, water evaporation/ transpiration is also high and vice versa. Though the state government stresses drinking water as a priority, farmers use water from canals and other sources to get better crops," the official said.

As per KSNDMC data, many major dams have less water compared to last year, which is partly because of evaporation.

2 kids among 4 killed in sudden Manipur flare-up

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR @ Guwahati

TENSIONS flared in ethnic violence-hit Manipur on Tuesday after four persons, including two children, were killed in a bomb attack and a firing incident. The incidents sparked widespread protests, prompting the state's BJP-led government to suspend internet services for three days in five Imphal Valley districts.

A five-year-old boy and a six-month-old infant girl were killed and their mother was injured in a bomb attack at around 1 am in the Moirang Tronglaobi area of Meitei-majority Bishnupur district, which shares a border with Kuki-majority Churachandpur district. When news about the incident spread, locals vented their ire by setting fire to two oil tankers and a truck.

People block a road after two kids were killed in Bishnupur district of Manipur | PTI

Soon after, a mob stormed the camp of a central force, setting several vehicles parked inside on fire. The personnel opened fire to control the situation and five protesters sustained bullet wounds. Two of them later succumbed to injuries. Some other protesters sustained minor injuries.

Protests later erupted in different parts of the Imphal Valley, demanding action against those involved in the bomb attack as well as the security personnel who had opened fire.

Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh said the state government decided to hand over the case of the bomb attack to the National Investigation Agency (NIA). The decision was taken after detailed discussions with home minister Konthoujam Govindas Singh and other MLAs.

IT RAINS RUNS

Rajasthan Royals' Yashasvi Jaiswal celebrates his half-century with captain Riyan Parag during the Indian Premier League T20 cricket match against Mumbai Indians in Guwahati on Tuesday. RR secured a clinical 27-run victory over MI in a rain-curtailed 11-over thriller. Jaiswal led the charge for RR with 77 off 32 balls | PTI | P15

114 mild quakes hit 16 dists in state in 5 years

VINCENT D'SOUZA @ Mangaluru

KARNATAKA has witnessed a dispersed but uneven pattern of low-intensity seismic activity over the past five years, with certain northern and north-eastern districts emerging as relatively more active, according to data presented in the Lok Sabha by the Ministry of Earth Sciences recently.

The data shows that while the overall number of earthquakes in the state remains modest -- 114 events between 2021 and 2025 -- their distribution is not uniform. Districts such as Vijayapura, Bidar and Kalaburagi account for a higher share of recorded tremors, indicating localised clusters of micro-seismic activity.

Vijayapura stands out as the most seismically active district in the state during this period, recording 11 earthquakes in 2021, followed by 19 in 2022, six in 2023, two in 2024, and seven in 2025. Bidar also shows sustained activity, with three events each in 2021 and 2022, peaking at seven in 2023, and continuing with two and three events in subsequent years. Kalaburagi, which saw no activity in 2021, recorded a notable uptick with five earthquakes in 2023 and four in 2025.

Ballari registered a distinct spike in 2024 with seven earthquakes after relatively low activity in preceding years. In contrast, southern and coastal districts such as Mysuru, Dakshina Kannada and Kolar reported only isolated or negligible seismic events.

The ministry's district-wise table includes only 16 districts, reflecting those where earthquakes were actually recorded during the period. Several other districts do not appear in the dataset as they did not register any measurable seismic events between 2021 and 2025. P4

Entry into Sabarimala part of denominational autonomy: Centre

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY
@ New Delhi

WITH hearing commencing on a batch of review petitions challenging the 2018 Sabarimala verdict, the Centre on Tuesday supported traditional restriction on the entry of women of menstruating age into the temple, telling the Supreme Court that the issue falls squarely within the domain of religious faith and denominational autonomy, adding it is beyond the scope of judicial review.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told a nine-judge bench that if there is something unscientific, the remedy is with the legislature. Wondering why advocates for women's entry into the Sabarimala temple invoke "patriarchy", Mehta argued that the concept is not rooted in India's societal framework.

India has always placed

Limits of bodily freedom

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said not everything is related to dignity or bodily freedom. "If I go to a mazar or a gurdwara and if I have to cover my head, I can't say my dignity, right or choice is taken away," he added

women on a higher pedestal, he argued. "In Indian society, we worship ladies... we bow down before our women deities.... So let us not introduce those concepts of patriarchy and gender stereotypes," he said.

Mehta said he had strong objection to an observation in the 2018 judgment that the exclusion of women from the temple was a form of 'untouchability', violating Article 17 of the Constitution.

Justice Nagarathna interjected, saying a woman cannot be treated as 'untouchable' for three days in a month and then cease to be considered untouchable on the fourth day. But Mehta said he was not on the issue of menstruation. He added that the temple bar was not about menstruation but age group.

EXPRESS READ

Engineering student found dead near hostel

Bengaluru: A 21-year-old engineering student was found dead near his hostel in Govindapura under the Yelahanka New Town police station limits on Tuesday. It is alleged that he jumped from the ninth floor of the hostel building. His father claimed that it is a case of murder | P3